LPRV ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Part I

by

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This book was written in response to numerous requests from practitioners for a basic guide to educational research. The guiding principles of the authors is to share good practice and share the values of the “good” which motivate people to try to improve their practice. The authors are not presenting a definitive answer, but are showing readers how they do action research, in the spirit of modeling their practice and inviting others to use it, if it is appropriate and relevant. Action research is distinguished from other forms of research in that the action drives the research and is the motivating force. Action research involves many people other than the researcher, and the way in which these people are involved is crucial for the methodology. Action researchers are intent on describing, interpreting and explaining events while they seek to change them for the better. The enquiry must by systematic, and made public; the action should be informed, committed and intentional; and; the purpose should be worthwhile.

The book covers seven sections: 1) living educational action research, 2) starting your action research project, 3) doing your action research project, 4) monitoring and documentation of the action, 5) techniques for dealing with data, 6) making claims to knowledge and validating them, and 7) making your research public.

The authors state that action research shares the following characteristics with other research:

- It leads to knowledge
- It provides evidence to support this knowledge
- It makes explicit the process of enquiry through which knowledge emerges
- It links new knowledge with existing knowledge

Action research is different from other research because:

- It requires action as an integral part of the research process itself
- It is focused by the researcher’s professional values rather than methodological considerations
- It is necessarily insider research, in the sense of practitioners researching their own professional actions

Action researchers can employ both qualitative research techniques and quantitative research techniques. When you use qualitative research techniques you will be looking at a small number of cases in as much detail as possible. When you use quantitative research techniques you will be looking at a large number of cases in less detail and will probably find statistics useful aids. Many action researchers use both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. Whichever techniques you use, you must follow the guidelines that have been developed for using the technique.

Being systematic about collecting data is important for many different aspects of the action research process. This involves collecting data so that you can pinpoint where your evaluation of actions has led to new insights about your practice. Systematic monitoring and evaluation of action will help to explicitly identify the points at which learning takes place. Collecting data involves some difficult decisions as it is not always possible to predict which data will be important later in the process. Data collection should be done in accordance a plan which is as comprehensive as possible. Researchers should also distinguish the data gathering actions between 1) factual accounts, 2) subjective accounts resulting from personal reflections and observations, and 3) fictionalized accounts which discuss events out of their specific context, to protect the identity of participants who may wish to remain anonymous.

To validate action research claims, it is useful to:
Make claims
Critically examine claims against evidence
Involve others in making judgements

Key questions to address when doing action research are:

- What is your research focus?
- Why have you chosen this issue as a focus?
- What kind of evidence can you produce to show what is happening?
- What can you do about what you find?
- What kind of evidence can you produce to show that what you are doing is having an impact?
- How will you evaluate that impact?
- How will you ensure that any judgements you might make are reasonably fair and accurate?
- What will you do then?

The basic action research cycle has nine steps: 1) review current practice, 2) identify an aspect to improve, 3) formulate action for moving forward, 4) try your action, 5) evaluate the results, 6) modify the action using the results of your evaluation and continue with your new action, 7) monitor the implementation, 8) evaluate the modified action, 9) continue this process any number of times until you are satisfied with the work.

Important stages in the action research project include:

- Preparation- identification of research area, initial reading, consideration of ethical issues, written statement of intent
- Resourcing- drawing up of budget, submission of budget, request for funding
- Working with other people- discussions with management and policy makers, invitations to potential groups of participants, invitations to potential validating group
- Doing the project- identification of concern, production of values, mission statement, gathering of evidence (1), identification of indicators, imagined solutions, implementing the solutions, gathering of evidence (2), evaluation of evidence (2), convening of validation group
- Production of report (claim to knowledge)
- Evaluation of project
The Search Conference (SC) is useful for participative strategic planning. It is a participative event that enables a large group to collectively create a plan that its members themselves will implement. Typically, 20-30 people from a community or organization work progressively for 2 or 3 days on planning tasks, primarily in large group plenary sessions. They develop long-term strategic visions, achievable goals, and concrete action plans. The benefits are that participants have a strong commitment to implementation, there is a focus on strategic planning. A SC is effective with time in a turbulent environment, brings diverse groups together, is a means of planning large-scale systems change in real time, and a SC generates excitement, energy and purposeful behaviour.

The outcomes of a SC are new strategies for growth, innovation and renewal, a joint vision for a more productive and humane workplace, new forums for collaborative decision making, new alliances, coalitions and partnerships for resolving complex problems, mobilization of a community of citizens around a pressing issue of common concern, and momentum within the group.

The SC is useful to organizations attempting to think beyond existing frameworks. The SC is ideal for communities and regions; organizations, private companies or public agencies; or groups of organizations or formal and informal associations.

Every SC should contain components that allow participants to:

- Learn about changes in the external environment
- Search for a desirable future, discover common ideals, becoming mindful of the probable future
- Gain a shared appreciation of the history of the system
- Critically analyze the functioning of the system
- Search for the most desirable future for their system, which includes the development of strategic goals that are achievable, taking into account likely constraints
- Develop precise and concrete action plans that can be implemented in ways that are consistent with the ideals and purposes outlined earlier in the conference

Process
The SC normally takes two and a half days, and is held off-site. The site should be removed from the daily routine and free of distractions from phones, messages, faxes, families, etc. The ideal facility offers access to outside and fresh air, and has natural or near-natural light, plenty of wall space, and reasonably comfortable furniture. Tables are not necessary, but there must be flipcharts or a blackboard available so that all participants can see the notes. 20-30 participants are selected based the following criteria: knowledge of the system, and potential for taking responsibility for implementation. Participants attend in their own right, not as representatives of stakeholder groups. The governing factors are the importance of each individual to the conference task; and the precise specification of the SC purpose.

Outcomes of the SC are open-ended and cannot be predicted in advance. The SC is designed to allow equal and open participation regardless of status, and all perceptions should be validated. The conference is designed to begin with a wide perspective, and then narrow down to specific key strategic visions and actions. The SC builds a democratic structure, locating the responsibility for coordination and control of planning tasks with those who attend the conference, since they are responsible for implementation. The
The assembly of people with the knowledge to achieve the purpose of the SC is essential, and a SC should only be convened if there is a clear purpose for doing so. To meet the conditions for effective information exchange and communication, there must be openness, a shared field among participants, psychological similarity, and trust. The search is for identifying common ground, not necessarily consensus.

The SC is not only a tool, but must be used in a theoretical context. The three phases of the SC are discrete, and should not be mixed, as each has a distinct learning outcome. The first phase is environmental appreciation. In this stage, current changes in the organization are acknowledged and desirable and probable futures are discussed. The second stage, system analysis, explores the history of the system, analyses the present system, and identifies desirable futures for the system. The third stage is the integration of the system and the environment, where participants deal with constraints and devise strategies and action plans.

The SC is often a tool for planning with uncertainty. The SC response to turbulence is to initiate community development and social change; generate an information base beyond the range of a small group of experts; and direct participation and involvement in planning and implementation, so that systems and the people within them learn how to become actively adaptive.

The SC uses open systems thinking, to understand the system of principles of the system, using concepts to explain why particular elements enter into participation in the system-environment relations. This requires a description of the transactions within the system, between the system and the environment, between the environment and the system, and in the environment. The system principle defines a special relation of interdependence between the set of transactions and the environment, so organizations must remain open and responsive to their environment if they are to maintain integrity and coherence.

SCs must be ideal seeking as a source of hope and long-term guidance for people in organizations and communities who are trying to cope with uncertainty. Organizations and communities that hope to survive must shift the responsibility for planning to the people in the organization. Most people have been taught that they cannot plan. To overcome this, they need a democratic learning environment in which to learn how to make changes for themselves, in directions they themselves determine. The assumption behind the SC is that people can always manage and govern themselves, given the right structural conditions. Its innovations stem for its use of democratic structure to promote full participation and open dialogue and debate in areas that have become the province of elite expertise.

Democracy requires an educated citizenry, and people need to learn to become public citizens. Education into citizenship can only be achieved through a practical from of education, by participating directly in local affairs. This is important for people who are trying to understand and behave responsibly in an environment characterized by rapidly growing uncertainty.

**THE FACILITATION APPROACH: A METHOD FOR PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS**


**LOCATION:** Koerner Library. **Call Number:** HN46.C2 D694 1991

**Introduction**

Community-based organizations (CBOs) are formalized structures enabling people to work together in pursuit of a common goal, through the division of labour and function, and a system of authority and responsibility. CBOs contribute to 1) a sense of community, 2) quality of life, and they operate in a wide variety of service areas- neighbourhood self-help, family support, basic adult literacy, seniors programs,
initiatives to assist the disabled, the poor, the disadvantaged. CBOs are also involved in social action and advocacy as well as community development to ensure that citizens are involved and have control of their everyday lives.

The document begins by identifying the problems and resource needs, outlines the organizational resources needed (facilitation), and explores considerations for using the facilitation approach.

**Community-Based Organizations**
Community is defined by geography, or as a community of common interests. Using the facilitation approach, funding may come from various sources but the CBO is not controlled by the funder. The structure may include a board of directors or other governing body, a constitution and/or bylaws, and may be run by volunteers and/or staff.

The types of organizations may be based on the criteria “who benefits”, or on the main purpose. Types based on the criteria “who benefits” include:

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<td>3) service organizations</td>
<td>Client group</td>
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<td>4) commonweal organizations</td>
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Types based on the main purpose of the organization include: 1) advocacy, 2) community service delivery, 3) development, 4) multi-purpose, and 5) intermediary.

Needs within the CBO must be recognized. These include:

- Human needs
- Organizational goals
- Organizational requirements
- Organizational factors

Each need must be assessed according to how it relates to reaching satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

**The Facilitation Approach**
Facilitation is help requiring special skills or resources provided to the CBO by an outside source. The purpose of facilitation is to strengthen the capacity of the CBO to fulfill its’ mission. The approach is to pursue community development. The UN (United Nations) approach involves: 1) planned programs focussing on total community needs, 2) self-help, 3) technical assistance, and 4) the integration of various specialties.

The primary providers of facilitation are intermediary organizations, support organizations to enable other CBOs to fulfill their mission through capacity and resource development.

Evaluating the effectiveness of the facilitation approach must assess the impact of the approach. Ways to measure the impact include: testimony of the client group, professionalism of the intermediary, availability of the intermediary to respond to the needs of the CBO, ability to build capacity of client groups, quality and relevance of material development, and the demand for the services of the intermediary.
Considerations for Using the Facilitation Approach
The facilitation approach focuses on the objective of capacity building, making it easier for other groups
and organizations to achieve their goals. This approach is a mixture of strategies and tactics. when using
the facilitation approach, it is important to consider the following:

- The unsatisfactory social condition that is the root of the problem to be addressed by the group.
- Aspects of the client group (the main beneficiary of the facilitation approach) such as physical
  location, demographic characteristics, the formal organization, divisions within the client group, and
  significant relations of the client group with other groups and organizations.
- The target group which the project is attempting to influence, including those who oppose changes, and
  those who will interfere by not participating or distracting the process.
- The strategy, or orchestrated attempt to influence a person, group or organization in relation to the
  goal. This can take the form of collaboration, a campaign, or direct action and conflict.
- The role, as determined by the strategy. Roles can be defined as collaborator, persuader, or contestant.
- The tactics used to execute the strategy. Gaining support, involving and organizing participants, and
  implementing action.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the facilitation approach, as outlined above.

Conclusion
There is a need to build the capacity of community-based organizations to fulfill their own needs and
achieve their goals. The facilitation approach is a way to develop the capacity of community-based
organizations, or CBOs.

REACHING OUT EFFECTIVELY: IMPROVING THE DESIGN,
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION
PROGRAMMES.

Asian and Pacific Development Centre. Reaching out effectively: improving
the design, management and implementation of poverty alleviation programs.
LOCATION: Koerner Library, University of British Columbia. Call Number:
HC430.6.Z9 P67 1991

Despite relatively high growth rates achieved in Asia during the past four decades of development efforts,
large numbers of people in most countries continue to live in abject poverty. Improvements in quality of
life have not been distributed among the poorest 20-40 percent of the population.

Increasing consensus on the need to continue development efforts is aimed directly at poverty eradication
for a number of reasons:

1) Conversion of the poor from a social liability to a social asset through investment in human capital:
education, health, and income-creating assets.
2) Poverty puts pressure on the poor to exploit the environment for survival, reducing its productive
capacity (although the poor have also taken initiatives to protect the environment, as demonstrated by
the experience of Chipko in India).
3) Persistent poverty (especially if it afflicts large sections of society) could cause social instability and
threaten the established social order.
4) Moral implications for society to help the poor as part of the human community.

Poverty for those in the bottom 40 percent of society is defined as human deprivation of the basic needs of
life such as food, health, education, shelter, clean drinking water, and basic social infrastructures. To
determine the effectiveness of poverty alleviation programmes, it is best to consider both inputs and results,
rather than inputs alone, as is common with conventional poverty alleviation programmes. Inputs include such quality of life indicators as per capita real income, per capita total consumption of goods and services, per capita food consumption and caloric intake, number of years in schooling, investments in health, sanitation, family planning, clean drinking water, and social infrastructures. Results focus on the effects of inputs on indicators like longevity, literacy and morbidity rates.

The extent of poverty is directly influenced by the real income of a family unit, determined by the access of the family unit to gainful employment, productive assets like land and capital goods, and transfer income (like food stamps and subsidies) received. Access to productive assets, especially land, is determined by the pattern of land and capital (including credit) distribution prevailing in society. This, in turn, is affected by the existing political, economic, social and cultural structures. Developing countries with the free market economies tend to have a high unequal distribution of income and assets while those under centrally planned economies tend to have a more egalitarian income and asset distribution.

Entitlement is a useful concept in understanding the poverty problem. Entitlement determines who has the right to have what according to the legal, economic, political, social and cultural characteristics affecting the position of different people within that system. Poverty removal can be viewed in this context as a process of providing a wide distribution of effective entitlement, especially to the weaker sections of society, largely through the intervention of the state. This would ensure that the poor have access to basic needs.

The experience with the strategy of high macro-economic growth, as measured by GNP, showed that undifferentiated growth benefited largely the better-off members of society. The fact that poverty has persisted and in some cases even worsened would seem to indicate that the strategies and programmes of conventional PAPs have largely been ineffective, are failing to reach the poor, and their effectiveness is increasingly questioned by governments and non-government organizations (NGOs).

There is an emerging consensus that even appropriate macro-economic growth strategies would need to be complemented with direct and target-oriented programmes especially designed to alleviate the condition of the poor. Strategies most commonly used include integrated rural development programmes, area development programmes, special credit programmes for target groups, decentralized administration systems, land and tenure reforms, provision of basic needs, and relief in the wake of natural disasters.

**Critical Elements in the Design of Poverty Alleviation Programmes**

The poor have been systematically denied whatever opportunities exist in social, economic and political relationships. The managerial and socio-political impediments that have plagued these problems have prompted a focus on the critical elements in the design of PAPs. First, the programmes must be formulated exclusively for the poor, and the poor must be defined unambiguously (with particular attention paid to women). The poor must also be identified at the operational level, and the main activity should be income generating activities, with social and infrastructure development activities as supplements, within a timeframe that ensures sufficient time for continued support to each poor person or household covered under the programme. The beneficiaries must also perform responsibly, paying back any loans with the support of a group dependent on the repayment of the loan. The poor must also mobilize and become organized in order to be empowered sufficiently to participate. The poverty alleviation programme also needs a separate and exclusive delivery system or implementing machinery to ensure that existing systemic barriers do not impede the implementation of a PAP.

In the 1970s and 80s, a number of highly effective specialized programmes for the poor evolved in many parts of Asia. Examples of these include the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, Urban Livelihood Financing Programme of the Philippines, and the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) in India.

The poor have the innate capacity to help themselves, as long as PAPs are designed, implemented and managed in a manner that suits the characteristics of the poor. Economic growth will be an important support for these programmes, and the government, NGOs and community-based institutions should each
help in the area where they are best able to serve. Not only must appropriate design features be incorporated at the project and programme level, but greater attention must also be given to more long-term and strategic aspects of poverty management.

**PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS:**
**A GUIDEBOOK FOR FIELD PROJECTS**


**LOCATION:** Koerner Library, University of British Columbia. Call Number: HD77 .P37 1995

This guidebook outlines adaptive strategies from Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) in Africa based on replicable participatory field research projects, which can also be used to make policy recommendations to foster an enabling environment for development.

The project purpose is to promote sustainable livelihoods for the poor, using the ecosystem-based approach, since the natural resources needed for cultivation, herding, collecting and hunting must be sustained. The study of adaptive strategies of people to a set of ecosystems can provide comparative knowledge that will be of use at the local, national and international levels. Participation must be integral to the research process, and it must be understood and practiced as a genuine process. There are four main types of participatory research methods: 1) The “participant observer”, where insights are derived from the observation of community actions rather than from normative statements of what “is”, 2) Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA), 3) Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), which uses local graphic representations created by the community that legitimize local knowledge and promote empowerment, and 4) Participatory Action Research (PAR), working to empower the local community or its representatives to manipulate the higher power structures. The central concepts of PRA, as the most self-conscious in promoting a new paradigm, are creativity, learning, localization, empowerment, respect, enjoyment and inclusiveness.

The term “adaptive strategies” describes a process of change in the way people reorganize their livelihood systems in response to long term changes and challenges. Not all adaptive strategies are sustainable in the long term. This text concentrates on those that lead to sustainable livelihood systems over at least three or four decades.

Five key characteristics are critical for area and site selection for research of adaptive strategies for sustainable livelihoods. These are 1) presumption of adaptive strategies, 2) coverage of range of conditions of the problem, 3) representation typical of target communities, 4) reasonable logistics (far enough from main areas to be representative of problems, but accessible), and 5) social access (openness and willingness of the participants to join process).

The constitution of the country research team should reflect the multidisciplinary nature of the research, and should include expertise in sciences related to ecosystems as well as the social sciences. There are also considerable advantages to including appropriately skilled local community members, and a sufficient number of people fluent in the local languages. All members should behave in such a way that they function in the field as a team. Community cooperants should be adequately rewarded for their time and effort, which can be significant.

A literature review can also be instructive in providing information about sources available in the contemporary knowledge system. Selecting the field research methods will depend on the context, and on the nature of information the team wishes to acquire, as well as the cost-effectiveness of the methods.
If the team is not well-known, considerable thought must be given to the best way of securing entry, beginning with the necessary official clearances. Entry points should reflect issues of concern to the local community.

The approach for the field strategy is to begin by gathering spatial, time and socio-economic information using a range of PRA techniques which are capable of generating a lot of information quickly, followed by a small internal workshop or consultation for researchers and key community informants to make a preliminary identification and analysis of coping strategies, adaptive strategies and issues related to sustainable livelihood. The second step is to prioritize special topics for investigation, using a wider range of techniques than PRA, such as participant observation, focused questionnaire surveys, and counting. Thirdly, the adaptive strategies require analysis, articulation and review.

Some basic techniques for gathering information in the first stage are spatial diagrams, transects, farm and grazing plans, historical resource maps, aerial photography, census and social maps, seasonal calendars, biographies, timelines, trend lines, Venn diagrams for institutional analysis, pair ranking, preference matrices, and wealth ranking and poverty analysis. This local information should then be linked to formal knowledge, enabling local communities to understand the planning and decision making process.

Information from the first stage should then be synthesized, and common topics identified for special investigation. Adaptive strategies should be articulated, and indicators developed. Indicators should originate with the community, and the concept of indicators must be explained using language that is understood by the local people. Indicators should be valid, measurable, verifiable, cost effective, timely, simple, relevant, sensitive, specific, punctual and precise.

Every country project should have a policy component to promote and institutional and economic external environment that will reinforce local adaptive strategies for sustainable livelihoods. The four key issues of preparing the policy analysis are the selection of the analyst, the process of integration of the analyst into the field team through an initial policy review, the dialogue in the field between the policy analyst and the field team, and the links to policy makers. It is important that the analyst have skills and experience in drafting policy recommendations, backing up clear recommendations with concise arguments and making reference to factual investigations and supporting data, running concurrently with the field work, and based on the issues identified in the preliminary literature survey. The analyst should address the larger issues, not the specific and peculiar concerns of one or two local communities; these policies must also touch base with each level from the local to the national or international.

The project must bring value to the community, adding to their knowledge, capacities, motivation or self-confidence, and make a tangible contribution to the realization of sustainable livelihoods. Outputs should be both at the community and the policy level.

PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES TO POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT


LOCATION: Koerner Library, University of British Columbia. Call Number: On Order

This report provides a detailed, in-depth analysis of the latest conceptual and pragmatic approaches to poverty alleviation. The approaches are analysed in the context of rural community development that emphasizes participation by the poor. The analysis focuses on the poorest of the poor, with particular attention given to the least empowered and the most at risk- women, vulnerable groups, and older persons.
There has been an evolution of the definition of development since the 1960s, when development meant an acceleration of economic growth. In the 1970s, development came to include attention to infrastructure, gradually incorporating the social aspects of development, from health and education to housing, using appropriate technology. The need to prevent development initiatives from damaging sensitive ecological environments was recognized in the 1980s, and the concept of “sustainable” development became popular. By the 1990s, there was a recognized need to address women’s needs and those of the poorest of the poor, and to involve them as full participants in development design and delivery.

In this report, “participation” refers to participation by all of the rural poor, not just their leaders, and “the poor” refers to the poorest of the rural poor. The strengths of the rural poor must be recognized: their existing mental and physical skills, their culture, social structures and information networks, their knowledge of the rural physical, agronomic and meteorological environment, and their inherent good sense of what is most important in a difficult and unpredictable environment. The two essential objectives for a successful development programme are environmental sustainability, and the use of integrated rural development. In addition to these objectives, the report lists five suggested objectives: 1) feasibility, 2) participation of the poorest of the poor in identifying priority needs, designing the project, and implementation and monitoring, 3) address improving the standard of living of the poorest, 4) empowerment, and 5) rectification of gender biases in a gender-respecting and appropriate manner.

There are eight critical issues to consider:

- The most effective types of programmes and projects
- Benefiting the poorest of the poor
- Gender issues
- Participation techniques
- Cost/benefit
- The most effective organizations and institutions
- Economic and political conditions required for effective participatory rural development
- Replicability and sustainability

The report reviews selected models of successful projects in Sudan, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, and the Central African Republic.

The factors making for replicable and sustainable integrated rural development for the poorest, using popular participation, are:

- Explicit targeting of the poorest rural groups, reserving a portion of the development assistance specifically for designated groups with the greatest needs, such as women and landless or resourceless peasants
- A combination of very specific projects, such as land reform, soil conservation, access to proper markets, the creation of communal granaries and food supplies for emergencies, water supply close to women’s work, road and/or bridge building or improvement, direct health care delivered locally, training in animal husbandry and crop rotation, etc.
- Total participation by the poorest in all the key phases of development planning and implementation. A crucial aspect of their participation is the acceptance by the poor, as well as by local officials and development professionals involved in the project, of personal and communal accountability.
- An explicit commitment by the national Government to promote democratic development in an equitable manner, for all persons, among regions, industrial sectors, income groups and age groups, not forgetting the needs of special groups such as refugees, AIDS sufferers and nomads.

According to literature reviewed and recent field work, the prerequisites- both necessary and sufficient- for successful participatory development are:

- A relatively well-developed democracy and relatively free press
Decentralization of political and development decision-making down to at least the level of rural towns, including a commitment by the national Government to stimulate socio-economic development in the poorer regions; and an encouragement of accountability down to the most local levels.

A positive rate of economic growth per capita, in real terms, characterized by labour-intensive industrialization and public works, both in urban and rural areas, favourable in terms of trade for rural products in urban areas (there should not be a large gap between urban and rural areas in terms of wages and the prices of products). The pattern of growth is as important as the rate of economic growth.

A programme of clearly defined land reform

A strong and explicit shared commitment to participatory development by the national Government, the multilateral agency involved and any non-governmental organizations participating, including an explicit commitment to address the needs of groups such as women and the elderly, and to include them as both recipients of development aid and participants in the process.

Good communications and oversight linkages between the national Government/agencies and the rural villages and towns, and among those and any multilateral agencies and non-governmental organizations involved, to prevent corruption or the syphoning off of funds and resources by bureaucracies of Governments and development agencies at the national, provincial or rural town level.

**CAN THE POOR INFLUENCE POLICY?: PARTICIPATORY POVERTY ASSESSMENTS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD**


Participatory poverty assessments (PPAs) respond to the challenge of inclusion by directly presenting the views of the poor to policymakers. The two main lessons of PPA for policy are 1) that the poor consistently emphasize different dimensions of poverty than those typically used in policy analysis, and 2) that where there is a broad policy dialogue on poverty that includes different civil society groups, the constituency for reform is widened, ownership increased, and the resulting policy is more likely to be implemented.

PPA uses a variety of flexible methods that combine both visual (mapping, matrices, diagrams) and verbal (open-ended interviews, discussion groups) techniques with the objective of better defining the experience of individuals, groups, households, and communities. Methodologies used by the World Bank include rapid rural appraisal (RRA), participatory rural appraisal (PRA), SARAR (self-esteem, associative strength, resourcefulness, action planning, and responsibility), beneficiary assessment (BA), and semistructured interviews and focus groups.

BA draws from consumer research, traditional qualitative social science research, anthropological participant observation, conversational interviews, focus group interviews, institutional assessments, and investigative journalism.

RRA was designed to develop an approach that would enable outsiders to learn about rural conditions and people’s realities quickly and cost-effectively. In the mid-1980s, RRAs evolved into the PRA approach, which placed greater emphasis on community participation. RRAs and PRAs use tools such as mapping, diagrams of changes, trends, and linkages (matrices and scoring).

SARAR uses visual aids to stimulate discussions. The main objectives of the SARAR are to build local capacity to plan for community development or to raise awareness of health and sanitation issues.
These methodologies were not originally designed to influence policy, but in the 1990s, participatory methods were used to achieve the broader objective of influencing policy. PPAs are classified into three categories based on their impacts: 1) deepening our understanding of poverty, 2) influencing policy, and 3) strengthening policy implementation. Factors that influence the approach and consequent outcome of PPAs include political context, support, commitment (in country and within the World Bank), relations between the bank and the governments, and levels of expertise.

1) As part of deepening the understanding of poverty, PPAs are beginning to provide insight into the dimensions of poverty, the causes and dynamics of poverty, priorities of the poor, and different levels of analysis.

2) With regard to influencing policy, insights arising from the PPAs are contributing to the broader debates within the World Bank on how to measure and monitor poverty, integrate social dimensions into policy and project work, and increase the impact of the Bank’s operations by adopting participatory approaches.

3) The impact of a PPA on strengthening the capacity to deliver poverty-focused policies can be assessed by identifying new institutional alignments and partnerships that arise as a result of the PPA. Increased dialogue and consequent partnerships can also contribute to widening the constituency for reform, increasing ownership, and strengthening the commitment to poverty reduction.

The major issues to consider when attempting participatory policymaking are the political environment, creating an environment conducive to poverty dialogue, ensuring that all stakeholders have a sense of ownership, and strengthening the policy delivery framework.

If the outcome of the PPA is to drive policy reform within the country and in the work of the Bank, there must be a commitment to poverty reduction, and the PPA manager needs to have a diverse set of skills, including technical methodological skills and skills in managing a participatory policy dialogue. A recommendation for good practice is to monitor not just the outcome of the policy dialogue or the poverty assessment but also the process and outcomes of the participation and consultation. PPA design is very important, and issues that should be addressed include building trust and understanding, and the results must be shared with various stakeholders- if the information gathered is not fed back to the communities, the participatory nature of the work is incomplete. To build a political base for policy change, the needs of the various stakeholders must be considered in designing a dissemination strategy. The PPA should also include a monitoring component.

Constraints on adopting participatory approaches in both projects and policy work are the difficulties in accounting for participation, lack of support in terms of time and funding, and lack of conviction by some Bank and government officials of the cost benefit effectiveness for participation. In order to address these constraints, three areas must be targeted: 1) strategic issues, 2) the emphasis for lending must shift from approving loans to poverty reduction goals, and 3) impacts on the poor must be assessed, rather than input and disbursement indicators.

At the community level, the research teams should be composed of equal numbers of men and women, with knowledge of the local culture and language, representing the diversity of people in the area. Appropriate local institutions with researchers who have the skills needed to effectively facilitate the PPA should be identified to undertake the research, so as not to jeopardize the credibility of the PPA. They should also ensure that they spend enough time in a community to become aware of the power relations and composition of the community, so that they can involve a broad range of participants, including the poorest. The nature of the research must be explained to the community so that they do not raise expectations in the community. Researchers should use standardized tools and techniques where possible. In the analysis and synthesis stage, it is important to understand the difficulties of drawing macro conclusions from micro analysis, and to present clear policy messages, not summaries of the entire process.
BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR POVERTY REDUCTION: THE PARTICIPATORY PROJECT PLANNING APPROACH OF THE WOMEN’S ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT TRAINING OUTREACH PROGRAM (WEMTOP)

LOCATION: Koerner Library, University of British Columbia. Call Number: HQ1240.5.I5 V57 1995

The Women’s Enterprise Management Training Outreach Program (WEMTOP), a project of the Economic Development Institute (EDI), is a participatory action-learning three year pilot training project which began its design phase in 1991 in three countries in Asia: India, Philippines and Bangladesh (Bangladesh was subsequently dropped from the design phase). The design process for the WEMTOP Pilot Project, analyzed in the present study, generated a “social methodology” for participation, capacity-building and transfer of ownership to intermediaries and grassroots clients, thus improving the potential for sustainability of intended project outcomes. The social methodology is an evolving one, since the WEMTOP design is a learning process in which the principles are put to the test and the process is continuously refined to ensure adherence and commitment to the principles.

The principle that guided EDI were: building technical and managerial capacity among intermediaries; decentralization of ownership and responsibility for effective program implementation; consensus-building to ensure collaboration among donor and field-level stakeholders; and, facilitating an evolutionary and flexible design process, to ensure responsiveness to concerns and problems articulated by stakeholders. A key concern was to enable women, especially poor women, to benefit fully from the development process.

WEMTOP is aimed at strengthening the capacity of intermediary NGOs to deliver management training to poor, specifically landless and assetless, women in the rural and urban areas. WEMTOP is developing appropriate training materials and a decentralized delivery mechanism to train these women to sustain their enterprises and increase their capacity to control both the enterprise and the income they derive from it. WEMTOP deviated from existing EDI practice (that normally focuses on the training of senior and mid-level policy makers and training of trainers) by devising a training strategy that made the linkage between EDI support and impact on the grassroots clients direct, visible and measurable. Teams of intermediary NGO staff are being trained through the Training of Enterprise Support Teams (TEST) by selected Partner Training Institutions (PTIs). The trained NGO staff will in turn design and deliver locally adapted grassroots management training (GMT) to clusters of their existing women clients.

The WEMTOP framework, called the “package completion approach,” promotes one element, management training, in a package of services, consisting also of credit and technical skill training, required to promote enterprise sustainability. Consistent with this framework, participating NGOs should already have been involved in supporting women’s income generating activities and have the capacity to facilitate the provision of credit and skill training from other sources. Program management at the country level was handled by members of country-level adhoc Steering Committees (SCs) assisted by a Project Coordinator. The country-level activities during the design phase were: a review of the microenterprise literature; a survey of the microenterprise sector; a Training Needs Analysis (TNA) workshop; and (in India and Philippines) a Project Design Roundtable. In articulating a WEMTOP objective, NGOs in each of the original three participating countries proposed an explicit commitment by WEMTOP to promoting women’s empowerment in addition to increasing their income-earning capacity. Consistent with this, NGOs highlighted the importance of combining both traditional business management training with training focused on human resource development in the TEST and GMT.
In India and Philippines, the SCs initiated and selected the PTIs. In order to manage the implementation of the TEST and subsequent GMT in India, the SC registered an organization called Udyogini with an office and support services to enable them to oversee and enhance their ownership of WEMTOP-India. In the Philippines, due to the high cost and SC inertia, EDI suspended its support for the program in April 1993.

The case study is about the intensive process of WEMTOP design to promote local ownership of the project. The elements that were important to ensure this ownership and which are analyzed in this study are: the identification of field level functionaries; evolution of collaborative relationships; and evolution of mutually acceptable financial and administrative procedures and guidelines. The last section, on lessons learned, identifies the adjustments that need to be made in donor procedures and management style to enable a genuinely participatory approach to project planning.

Ten priority areas for adjustment were identified. The lessons learned that may contribute to understanding the needs of participatory projects were that: projects require flexibility in terms of time allocated for the design phase (for a sustainable program and outcomes); high upfront costs for diagnostic work may be cost-effective in the long run, by reducing the costs of program management and supervision during implementation; network-building is essential to provide ongoing facilitation for participation in each stage, including implementation; continuity in project staff is important; time and energy must be invested by staff to ensure flexibility of administrative and financial procedures critical for local stakeholder support and effective program management; long-term financing of the project must be assured internally and externally to maintain trust; the success of the Steering Committee is dependent on contact with the NGO community, the dynamics within the group, and between the individuals in the group and donors; institutional support for the specific empowerment objective, income enhancement, and support for a women-run NGO helps to strengthen women’s commitment to the program; and finally, consultative processes should be custom-designed, based on needs assessments at all levels, even among different groups in the same organization.

AN APPROACH TO ESTIMATING THE POVERTY ALLEVIATION IMPACT OF AN AGRICULTURAL PROJECT


In many Asian developing countries (ADCs), impressive economic growth rates have alleviated but not eliminated the problem of poverty. The paper explores an approach where economic analysis undertaken on an efficiency basis is extended to indicate a project’s poverty alleviation impact. The limited purpose of the paper is to highlight an approach for estimating the poverty alleviation impact of an agricultural project whose economic analysis is undertaken on an efficiency basis. Given the thrust of the paper on estimating the poverty alleviation impact of a project after the economic analysis has been done, it implies that the approach to estimating the poverty alleviation impact of a project is positive compared to the normative one underpinning social cost-benefit analysis.

The approach described is general as it can be used to assess the impact of agricultural strategies as well as projects. Agricultural production, income generation, expenditure distribution and poverty are simultaneously considered. Since the point of departure of this paper is the introduction of poverty aspects, the distribution of production, income and expenditure will constitute its central elements. In the context of agriculture, these aspects of distribution are mainly determined by land distribution. This provides the rationale for the use of landholding classes in the analysis. The paper begins by providing a brief account of the integrated framework of analysis that is developed. This methodology permits users to relate
production in agriculture with poverty. Against this background, the details of the approach are taken up in succeeding sections.

The main sources of income considered are agricultural and livestock production and wage income. Crop output is determined by area, extent of irrigation, crop mix and yields. For each landholding class, a distinction is drawn between irrigated and unirrigated areas. Livestock output is determined by the distribution of livestock across landholding classes. Wage income for each farm household size class is determined on the basis of total wage income and labor utilization and supply in each landholding class.

In this paper, absolute poverty is be related to energy or calorie intake. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a relationship between calorie intake and expenditure levels. Relative and absolute poverty constitute the two main concepts of poverty. While inequality in the distribution of expenditure provides an index of relative poverty, subsistence expenditure or consumption levels determine the magnitude of absolute poverty. For a project being analyzed on efficiency considerations, the authors of the paper are primarily interested in the impact of inter-class redistribution of expenditure.

The major contribution of this paper is to extend the economic analysis of an agriculture project with a well defined boundary to indicate the project’s poverty alleviation impact. Any attempt to use this approach must be preceded by baseline data collection and generation. Baseline information on frequency distribution by each category of agents or landholding class will need to be gathered as well as the relationship between calorie intake and expenditure levels.

The approach developed will generate information on the extent of absolute and relative poverty, the nature of poverty and the cause of poverty. This information would be invaluable in the alternative designs of a project. Different project designs may generate different income streams along classes of economic agents. The approach is particularly useful on issues relating to access to different landholding classes. For example, keeping total output of a project constant, if project design is concerned with improving access of inputs to target groups, production response across landholding classes would be different and thereby generate different outcome streams. Thus, a major potential of the approach described would be to use it in considering alternative designs of a project. With each design there will be a different poverty alleviation impact.

If price policy change accompanies a project, the impact of that change will be felt on the cropping patterns. Since the approach developed explicitly allows for cropping patterns to vary across landholding classes, the poverty alleviation impact of price policy reform can be explicitly accounted for. Thus the approach could be a powerful analytical device in assessing the project and policy impact on poverty alleviation for a certain class of situations associated with agricultural policies and strategies.

Extending economic analysis to assess the poverty alleviation impact of an agricultural project with a well defined boundary will require a major effort at baseline data collection at the feasibility stage. This paper demonstrates the potential of one possible approach. If poverty alleviation is a serious consideration in project design, the paper indicates that a major methodological and empirical commitment will have to accompany the extension of economic analysis to assess the project’s poverty alleviation impact.

**AN APPRAISAL OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN SOUTH VIETNAM**

*Hoang Ngoc Thanh. Appraisal of the Community Development Program in South Vietnam (since March 1957). Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1959.*

LOCATION: Koerner Library, University of British Columbia. Call Number: On Order
This thesis by Mr. Hoang Ngoc Thanh was submitted to the Graduate School at the University of the Philippines in 1959 in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education. The study is designed to appraise the community development program organized in March 1957, in Vietnam, based on principles, goals, organization and operation.

The principles and goals of community development following the eight year war with France are examined to know to what extent they affect the postwar economic, social and political conditions of the country. The goals aim at motivating people into the task of rebuilding the country and at the same time it attempts to change the sense of values of the people for better ways of life. The administration of the program was also examined with special emphasis on the coordination of the various government agencies entrusted with the program.

The goals specify the practical and idealistic aspects of community development, and the realization of the ideals in terms of means depends on the flexibility of the organization to meet different problems and situations. The flexibility exists at least to a certain minimum in the whole country but manifests itself mostly in Central Vietnam, where social consciousness and high educational standards allow a greater popular participation in local leadership and in the organization as well as in the operation of the movement. The attitudes of community development workers also increase or hamper the flexibility of the machinery, depending on their success of failure with using democratic procedures in their implementation of the program in villages.

The Vietnamese villages, in the lowlands and highlands, in the Central and Southern regions, have different conditions. The villages in Central Vietnam are better organized, which explains partly the success of the movement in this part of the country. However, the success also depends on the active contribution of the various departments and a good coordination between different governmental agencies. The highlands need more native workers from the mountain tribes to carry out the policy of social improvement and the realization of “concentrated villages” for the benefit of the highlanders.

The achievements of the movement connote great emphasis in the works of public utility which might cause neglect in the immediate economic improvement of the common people. The goal of changing the outlook of the people must not also be overlooked.

The analysis of the principles, goals, organization and operation of the program brings forth the strong points and the weaknesses which suggest the offering of a number of recommendations for further improvements of the movement in Vietnam.

Even at the village level, the administration is centralized, but in Central Vietnam, the presence of an elected village consultative council with a quasi legislative power, makes the administration more democratic than in other parts of the country. In Central Vietnam, the village councils regularly carry on their duties, have adequate offices and working facilities, village budgets, and the lower divisions of a village are well organized. The administrators making the observation trip stated that good organization of a village is a deciding factor in the success of the community development program. Some of the conditions that made Central Vietnam a more successful example of the community development program were:

- Small village areas
- Public lands occupying a dominant surface become the most important source of profit for the people, and are used as a means to hold the lower ranks of villagers
- Political opposition consists mainly of Communist underground cadres, and is not as complex as in the South (due to religious sects)
- The provincial situation is much better (tax collecting is easy, people pay promptly, village officials are well-paid).

In a well-organized village, many community development projects are easily realized. The planning and implementation of the community development program is a good opportunity for the administrators to consolidate various village organizations and eliminate undesirable elements. Ordinary citizens must also
see their own welfare in the reason behind any government’s action, since most people long for a better life after so many years of war and destruction.

Another important factor in the Vietnamese villages is that they have a tradition of community development. Since ancient times, conforming to communal regulations, villagers have always worked together in an effort to develop and improve their own living conditions. To them, taking part in communal affairs is not only a duty, it is also an honor. The development of this self-help concept is partly attributed to the attachment of the Vietnamese peasants to their native soil, and to some extent it is also due to the organizing spirit and special living conditions of the villagers. It can be said that the old democratic institutions and the organization of society and administration in the villages have created favorable conditions for the development of community traditions.

Sometimes, with an eagerness for accomplishment, community workers do not give enough explanations to the people. Workers do not enlighten villagers as to all the aspects of the program or ask for contributions of too much time or resources. The result is that public works projects are frequently achieved, but rural people do not see any improvement in their daily life.

Another factor no less important in the efficiency of the operation is a satisfactory coordination between various departments. Since community development embraces all aspects of people’s life, an active contribution and coordinated synchronization between various government agencies can help the administration of the program to realize better achievements. Considering the centralized character of the government and the nature of the program, it is essential to develop close relations between common people and officials or administrators to avoid the shortcomings of a bureaucratic administration and to safeguard the democratic characteristics of community development.

Action Research

ACRES is the Scandinavian-based Action Research Development Program. ACRES originated in Sweden as a direct result of experiences in Sweden and Norway with action research focused on workplace reform.

Action research can be discussed from a variety of points of view and with regard to different social settings.

The book focuses on the practice of action research and refers to a specific way of understanding and managing the relationship between theory and practice, between researcher and researched. This relationship should always be understood as dialogue, moving away from the idea that the method and object of study are separated and independent. Epistemology should no longer be reduced to a method.

The thematic propositions encountered in action research are: 1) use of language; the experience of action research is expressed in the communicative sphere and requires collaboration, 2) ethics; action research requires an orientation to “the other” and the “other” requires primacy, despite the value orientation of the researcher, 3) role and action; receptivity to others is a methodological necessity, the researcher requires self-knowledge and willingness to learn, 4) containment; the ability of the researched to accept projections of anger or anxiety expressed through the process of open communication with out personally absorbing the emotions, 5) learning; action research should be a process of joint learning, and 6) use of objects; objects should be used as transitional, understanding that human experience is mediated through socialization and language.
Elements that form the central frame of reference for the necessary ongoing reflexivity are the focus of research objectives and questions; the nature of the contextual setting and social perspective of the focus; the approach, and; assumptions of each of the three other elements.

ACRES workshops are structured to share the experience of participants in a single learning environment. The objectives are to:

- Give methodological, theoretical and practical support to ACRES, and provide specific learning opportunities
- Provide doctoral credits in Norway and Sweden
- Contribute to the development of projects
- Contribute to the development of the distinctive competence of institutes
- Learn about interdependencies between institutes, projects and researchers
- Promote collaboration between institutes, researchers and projects, and to facilitate the development of networks

Additional articles in the book discuss:

- Action research paradigms
- Research in ACRES
- Organizational processes in ACRES
- The rhetoric of action research: writing in the ACRES Program, and views from ACRES participants
- Applied research or action research? Different of complementary methods
- Linking social science; Working life research and work reform; a role for universities

Case studies include:

- The action research tradition in the U.S.: Towards a strategy for revitalizing the social sciences, the university and the American city
- Bottom-up organizational change: The Segerstrom Case
- Setting the scene for effecting dialogue between men and women at work
- Do we need a gender perspective in action research on work organizations?
- Learning to learn: PAR in public schools
- How about a dialogue? The communicative perspective meets the socio-ecological perspective

PURSUING PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH CROSS-CULTURAL UNIVERSITY PARTNERING: THE CANADA ASIA PARTNERSHIP EXPERIENCE


This book documents and studies the lessons learned from the Canada Asia Partnership (CAP)- a CIDA funded program from 1990-1996 that brought together three universities (the University of Calgary, Mahidol University in Thailand and the Ateo de Davao University in the Philippines,) in a cross-cultural partnership for participatory development. The central concern of the study is whether the CAP Program provides a successful model for participatory development that should be replicated in other development programs. The author describes the lessons learned from the project's experience in: training, workshops, research, institutional strengthening, networking and participatory administration. The author often refers to
the tension that arose during the project between researchers and (especially between the project people and the funding institution,) over the conflict between the community-based research paradigm and the social-sciences research paradigm. The study's conclusion centres around the benefits of university partnerships, the definition of participation, the inclusion of the state in participatory planning and the importance of focusing on marginalized groups as the main stakeholders in the process.
SOON TO BE AVAILABLE:

For completion by Sarah Farina, M.A. Planning Candidate, UBC-SCARP


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